<u>**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**</u>

What is claimed is:

1.   (Original) A method comprising:
        storing a configuration for a distributed environment in a central storage of the
distributed environment; and
        updating a portion of the configuration in the distributed environment.

2.   (Original) The method of Claim 1 wherein updating comprises:
        acquiring a lock for the portion of the configuration in a first node in the
distributed environment;
        modifying the portion of the configuration;
        invalidating a representation of the portion of the configuration in the distributed
environment; and
        releasing the lock.

3.   (Original) The method of Claim 2 wherein updating further comprises:
        updating a database to reflect modifications of a portion of the configuration; and
        blocking reads of the configuration during the updating.

4.   (Original) The method of Claim 2 wherein updating further comprises:
        notifying nodes in the distributed environment of the updated configuration data.

5.   (Original) The method of Claim 2 wherein the lock is cluster wide.

6.   (Original) The method of Claim 2 wherein updating further comprises:
        writing changes to a shared database.

7.   (Original) The method of Claim 2 wherein modifying comprises:
        changing a configuration object in a branch of a tree structure.

8.   (Original) The method of Claim 2 wherein invalidating comprises:
        sending a cache invalidation event to another node in the cluster.

9.   (Original) The method of Claim 2 wherein invalidating comprises:
        sending a message to a plurality of Java 2 Enterprise Edition (J2EE) nodes.

10.   (Original) The method of Claim 2 wherein updating further comprises:
       notifying registered listeners that the configuration has been changed.

11.   (Original) A system comprising:
       a plurality of nodes each having a instance of a configuration manager to maintain
consistent storage of a configuration across the nodes without passing configuration
modifications between the nodes;
       a locking server shared by the plurality of nodes to coordinate access to the
configuration; and
       a database management system to provide an interface with a shared relational
database, the database to store the configuration.

12.   (Original) The system of Claim 11 wherein the configuring manager comprises:
       a configuration cache; and
       a configuration handler.

13.   (Original) The system of Claim 12 wherein the configuration manager further
comprises:
       a persistency handler.

14.   (Original) The system of Claim 11 further comprising:
       a configuration handler to permit access to and modification of the configuration.

15.   (Original) The system of Claim 11 wherein the configuration comprises:
       a plurality of persistent objects holding information about a Java 2 enterprise
edition cluster.

16.   (Original) The system of Claim 15 wherein some of the persistent objects are
cacheable.

17.   (Original) The system of Claim 11 wherein the configuration manager comprises:
       a change event listener to notify registered components of configuration change
events.

18.   (Original) A computer readable storage media containing executable computer
program instructions which when executed cause a digital processing system to perform a
method comprising:

storing a configuration for a distributed environment in a central storage of the distributed environment; and

updating a portion of the configuration in the distributed environment.

19.   (Original) The computer readable storage media of Claim 18 containing executable computer program instructions which when executed cause a digital processing system to perform the method wherein updating comprises:

acquiring a lock for the portion of the configuration in a first node in the distributed environment;

modifying the portion of the configuration;

invalidating a representation of the portion of the configuration in the distributed environment; and

releasing the lock.

20.   (Original) The computer readable storage media of Claim 19 containing executable computer program instructions which when executed cause a digital processing system to perform the method wherein updating comprises:

updating a database to reflect modifications of a portion of the configuration; and

blocking reads of the configuration during the updating.

21.   (Original) The computer readable storage media of Claim 19 containing executable computer program instructions which when executed cause a digital processing system to perform the method wherein updating comprises:

notifying node in the distributed environment of the current configuration data.

22.   (Original) The computer readable storage media of Claim 19 containing executable computer program instructions which when executed cause a digital processing system to perform the method wherein updating further comprises:

changing the configuration locally;

writing the changes to a shared database; and

committing the changes.

23.   (Original) The computer readable storage media of Claim 19 containing executable computer program instructions which when executed cause a digital processing system to perform the method wherein invalidating comprises:

sending a cache invalidation event to another node in the cluster.

24.   (Original) The computer readable storage media of Claim 19 containing executable computer program instructions which when executed cause a digital processing system to perform the method wherein updating comprises:
        notifying registered listeners that the configuration has been changed.

25.   (Original) A system comprising:
        means for maintaining consistent storage of configuration information in a distributed environment;
        means for controlling access to the configuration information; and
        means for interfacing with a relational database system to provide persistent storage of the configuration information.

26.   (Original) The system of Claim 25 wherein the configuration information comprises:
        a plurality of persistent objects holding information about a Java 2 Enterprise Edition cluster.

27.   (Original) The system of Claim 25 wherein the means for maintaining comprises:
        a configuration cache resident in each node of the distributed environment; and
        a configuration handler resident in each node of the distributed environment.